

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2019

Remarks at the Iftar Dinner

May 13, 2019

Well, thank you very much, everybody. Please. And good evening.

During this very special time when Muslims around the world celebrate Ramadan, it is my great privilege to welcome you to this iftar dinner at the White House.

We're pleased to be joined by Vice President Mike Pence. Where is Mike? Please, Mike. And, Mike, we're in there working hard, right? And we're getting it done like very few have gotten it done before. We're doing really well as a country; we're very proud of our country. And thank you for the great work, Mike.

I also want to thank Secretary Steven Mnuchin. Steve. Good, Steve. Steve just got back from China. We'll let you know in about 3 or 4 weeks whether or not it was successful. *[Laughter]* You never really know, right? But I have a feeling it's going to be very successful. Acting Secretary Patrick Shanahan. Patrick, thank you very much. And Secretary Alex Azar for being here. Where's Alex? And drug prices have gone down for the first time in 51 years—they've gone down. First time in 51 years. Great job, Alex. That's really fantastic.

And a very special welcome to one of our great chaplains of the United States Army, who earlier this month led us in a moving prayer in the Rose Garden: Imam Agbere. Thank you. Thank you. Imam. Thank you very much. Great job. It was a beautiful job.

Tonight we're grateful to host many of the Ambassadors and members of the diplomatic corps representing countries with large Muslim populations. We're delighted to share this special meal with so many esteemed dignitaries, so many friends—I have so many friends in this room—and cherished partners from around the world. We're honored by your presence and strengthened by your friendship. Thank you very much for all being here. We're going to have a great evening together.

Ramadan is a holy month for Muslims here in the United States and all across the world. During this month of worship, Muslims fast from sunrise to sundown and focus on prayer and spiritual life to deepen their devotion to God.

Ramadan is a time of charity, of giving, and service to our fellow citizens. Ramadan is a very special time. It's a time to draw closer as families, neighbors, and communities. And Ramadan is a time when people join forces in pursuit of hope, tolerance, and peace. It is in this spirit that we come together tonight for iftar, the traditional Ramadan meal that breaks the daily fast.

This evening our thoughts are also with the religious believers who have endured many trials and hardships in recent weeks. It's been a very rough period of time. Our hearts are filled with the grief for Muslims who were killed in their mosques in New Zealand, as well as the Christians, Jews, and other children of God who were slain in Sri Lanka, California, and Pittsburgh.

In their blessed memory, we resolve to defeat the evils of terrorism and religious persecution so that all people can worship without fear, pray without danger, and live by the faith that flows from their heart. We thank God that America is a place founded on the belief that citizens of all faiths can live together in safety and live together in freedom.

As we prepare to dine together this evening, let us pray for a future of harmony and peace. Let us ask God to forever shine His goodness and blessings upon us. And let us continue to work together to build a future filled with hope and good will for our children and for all of the people of the world.

With that, I would like to wish every Muslim in America and around the globe *Ramadan Kareem*. Very important. And I want to thank you all for being here. Very special people. It's a great honor. We're going to have a good meal. And if it's not good, blame me, okay? [*Laughter*] Blame me.

Thank you very much. Thank you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:37 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Acting Secretary of Defense Patrick M. Shanahan.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Iftar dinner.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Agbere, Dawud Abdul-Aziz; Azar, Alex M., II; Mnuchin, Steven T.; Pence, Michael R.; Shanahan, Patrick M.

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